

Win me and weare me, let him answere me,
Come follow me boy, come sir boy, come follow me
Sir boy, ile whip you from your foyning fence,
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

Leon. Brother.

Brot. Content your self, God knows I lou'd my neece,
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villaines,
That dare as well answer a man indeede,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.

Boyes apes, braggarts, lackes, milke-sops.

Leon. Brother Anthony.

Brot. Hold you content, what man? I know them, yea
And what they weigh, even to the vtmost scruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boyes,
That lye, and cog, and flout, depraue, and slander,
Goe antiquely, and show outward hidiousnesse,
And speake of halfe a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst.
And this is all.

Leon. But brother Anthony.

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter,

Do not you meddle, let me deale in this.

Pri. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience
My heart is sorry for your daughters death:
But on my honour she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proofe.

Leon. My Lord, my Lord.

Prin. I will not heare you.

Enter Benedicke.

Leo. No come brother, away, I will be heard.

Exit ambo.

Brot. And shall, or some of vs will smart for it.

Prin. See, see, here comes the man we went to seeke.

Clau. Now signior, what newes?

Ben. Good day my Lord.

Prin. Welcome signior, you are almost come to part
almost a fray.

Clau. Wee had likt to haue had our two noses snap
off with two old men without teeth.

Prin. Leonato and his brother, what think'ft thou had
wee fought, I doubt we should haue bene too yong for them.

Ben. In a false quarrell there is no true valour, I came
to seeke you both.

Clau. We haue bene vp and downe to seeke thee, for
we are high prooffe melancholly, and would faine haue it
beaten away, wilt thou vse thy wit?

Ben. It is in my scabbard, shall I draw it?

Prin. Doeft thou weare thy wit by thy side?

Clau. Neuer any did so, though verie many haue been
beside their wit, I will bid thee drawe, as we do the mini-
sters, draw to pleasure vs.

Prin. As I am an honest man he looks pale, art thou
sicke, or angrie?

Clau. What, courage man: what though care kil'd a
cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Ben. Sir, I shall meete your wit in the careere, and
you charge it against me, I pray you chuse another sub-
iect.

Clau. Nay then giue him another staffe, this last was
broke crossie.

Prin. By this light, he changes more and more, I thinke
he be angrie indeede.

Clau. If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.

Ben. Shall I speake a word in your care?

Clau. God blese me from a challenge.

Ben. You are a villaine, I left not, I will make it good
how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare:
do me right, or I will protest your cowardise: you haue
kill'd a sweete Ladie, and her death shall fall heauie on
you, let me heare from you.

Clau. Well, I will meete you, so I may haue good
cheare.

Prin. What, a feast, a feast?

Clau. I faith I thanke him, he hath bid me to a calues
head and a Capon, the which if I doe not carue most cu-
riously, say my knife's naught, shall I not finde a wood-
cocke too?

Ben. Sir, your wit ambles well, it goes easily.

Prin. He tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy wit the o-
ther day: I said thou hadst a fine wit: true saies she, a fine
little one: no said I, a great wit: right saies shee, a great
grosse one: nay said I, a good wit: iust said she, it hurts
no body: nay said I, the gentleman is wise: certain said
she, a wise gentleman: nay said I, he hath the tongues:
that I beleue said shee, for hee swore a thing to me on
munday night, which he forswore on tuesday morning:
there's a double tongue, there's two tongues: thus did
shee an howre together trans-shape thy particular ver-
ities, yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the
proprest man in Italie.

Clau. For the which she wept heartily, and said shee
car'd not.

Prin. Yea that she did, but yet for all that, and if shee
did not hate him deadlie, shee would loue him dearly,
the old mans daught'r told vs all.

Clau. All, all, and moreover, God saw him when he
was hid in the garden.

Prin. But when shall we set the sauage Bulls hornes
on the sensible Benedicke's head?

Clau. Yea and text vnderneath, heere dwells Bene-
dicke the married man.

Ben. Fare you well, Boy, you know my minde, I will
leauy you now to your gossep-like humor, you breake
iects as braggards do their blades, which God be thank-
ed hurt not: my Lord, for your manie courtesies I thank
you, I must discontinue your companie, your brother
the Bastard is fled from Messina: you haue among you,
kill'd a sweete and innocent Ladie: for my Lord Lacke-
beard there, he and I shall meete, and till then peace be
with him.

Prin. He is in earnest.

Clau. In most profound earnest, and Ile warrant you,
for the loue of Beatrice.

Prin. And hath challeng'd thee.

Clau. Most sincerely.

Prin. What a prettie thing man is, when he goes in his
doubler and hose, and leaues off his wit.

Enter Constable, Courade, and Borachio.]

Clau. He is then a Giant to an Ape, but then is an Ape
a Doctor to such a man.

Prin. But soft you, let me be, plucke vp my heart, and
be sad, did he not say my brother was fled?

Const. Come you sir, if iustice cannot tame you, shee
shall nere weigh more reasons in her ballance, nay, and
you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.

Prin. How now, two of my brothers men bound? Bo-
rachio one.

Clau. Harken after their offence my Lord.

Prin. Officers, what offence haue these men done?

Con. Marrie

Const. Marrie sir, they haue committed false report,
moreouer they haue spoken vntruths, secondarily they
are slanders, sixt and lastly, they haue belyed a Ladie,
thirdly, they haue verified vnjust things, and to conclude
they are lying knaues.

Prin. First I aske thee what they haue done, thirdlie
I aske thee what's their offence, sixt and lastlie why they
are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their
charge.

Clau. Rightlie reasoned, and in his owne diuision, and
by my troth there's one meaning vvell suer'd.

Prin. Who haue you offended masters, that you are
thus bound to your answer? this learned Constable is too
cunning to be vnderstood, vwhat's your offence?

Bor. Sweete Prince, let me go no farther to mine an-
swere: do you heare me, and let this Count, kill mee: I
haue deceiued euery your verie eies: vwhat your wife-
domes could not discouery, these shallow fooles haue
brought to light, vwho in the night ouerheard me con-
fessing to this man, how Don Iohn your brother incensed
into the Orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Heroes
garments: how you disgrac'd her vwhen you should
marrie her: my villanie they haue vpon record, vwhich
I had rather seale vwith my death, then reapeate ouer to
my shame: the Ladie is dead vpon mine and my masters
false accusation: and briefelie, I desire nothing but the
reward of a villaine.

Prin. Runs not this speech like yron through your
bloud?

Clau. I haue drunke poison whiles he vtter'd it.

Prin. But did my Brother set thee on to this?

Bor. Yea, and paid me richly for the practise of it.

Prin. He is compos'd and fram'd of treacherie,

And fled he is vpon this villanie.

Clau. Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appeare
In the rare semblance that I haue d'it first.

Const. Come, bring away the plaintiffes, by this time
our Sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter:
and masters, do not forget to specifie when time & place
shall serue, that I am an Assle.

Con. 2. Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and
the Sexton too.

Enter Leonato.

Leon. Which is the villaine? let me see his eies,
That when I note another man like him,

I may auoide him: vwhich of these is he?

Bor. If you would know your wronger, looke on me.

Leon. Art thou thou the slave that with thy breath
hast kild mine innocent childe?

Bor. Yea, euen I alone.

Leo. No, not so villaine, thou beliefst thy selfe,

Here stand a paire of honourable men,

A third is fled that had a hand in it:

I thanke you Princes for my daughters death,

Record it with your high and worthie deedes,

'Twas bravely done, if you bethinke you of it.

Clau. I know not how to pray your patience,

Yet I must speake, choose your reuenge your selfe,

Impose me to what penance your inuention

Can lay vpon my sinne, yet sinn'd I not,

But in mistaking.

Prin. By my soule nor I,

And yet to satisfie this good old man,

I would bend vnder anie hee
That heele enioyne me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you

That were impossible, but I

Possesse the people in Mess

How innocent she died, and

Can labour aught in sad inu

Hang her an epitaph vpon h

And sing it to her bones, fin

To morrow morning come

And since you could not be

Be yet my Nephew: my bro

Almost the copie of my chil

And she alone is heire to bo

Giue her the right you shou

And so dies my reuenge.

Clau. O noble sir!

Your ouerkindnesse doth w

I do embrace your offer, and

For henceforth of poore Cla

Leon. To morrow then I

Tonight I take my leauy, thi

Shall face to face be brought

Who I beleue was packt in

Hired to it by your brother.

Bor. No by my soule she

Not knew not what she did

But alwaies hath bin iust and

In anie thing that I do know

Const. Moreouer sir, which

and black, this plaintiffe her

asse, I beseech you let it b

ment, and also the vvrach hea

med, they say he weares a key

ing by it, and borrowes mon

he hath vs'd so long, and neue

hard-harted and will lend no

you examine him vpon that

Leon. I thanke thee for t

Const. Your vvorship spe

and reuerend youth, and I pr

Leon. There's for thy pa

Const. God saue the fou

Leon. Goe, I discharge

thanke thee.

Const. I leauy an arrant

which I beseech your worsh

the example of others: G

wish your worships vwell, C

I humbly giue you leauy

rie meeting may be wisht,

neighbour.

Leon. Vntill to morrow

Brot. Farewell my Lord

row.

Prin. We will not faile.

Clau. To night ile mour

Leon. Bring you these fe

Margaret, how her acquaint

fellow.

Enter Benedicke

Ben. Praie thee sweete

well at my hands, by helpin

trice.